



PLANNING COMMISSION

Planning & Development Services Department • 201 N. Stone Ave. • Tucson, AZ 85701

DATE: September 12, 2018
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Scott Clark
Executive Secretary

SUBJECT: *Arroyo Chico Area Plan Amendment PA-18-02, Amendment to Allow Residential Uses Public Hearing (Ward 5)*

Request: This is a request for a plan amendment to the *Arroyo Chico Area Plan (ACAP)* submitted by Brian Underwood of the Planning Center on behalf of the property owner at 585 S. Cherry Avenue. The proposed amendment would allow consideration of mixed uses, including residential, in an area currently designated for “Light Industrial or Commercial” by revising the relevant ACAP map to show “Light Industrial and/or Commercial and/or Residential.” The 2.2-acre site, with a 9,000-square-foot warehouse storage building, consists of three parcels located on the southeast corner of East 15th Street and South Cherry Avenue. [See Attachments A & B.]

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Planning Commission forward the proposed amendment to Mayor and Council with a recommendation to amend the *Arroyo Chico Area Plan* by revising the Industrial Area 2 Map to show allowable uses for the amendment site as “Light Industrial and/or Commercial and/or Residential.” [See Attachments C & D.]

Planning Commission Action: On August 15, 2018, the Planning Commission held a study session on this plan amendment request. The Planning Commission recommended that the case be set for public hearing in September 2018. The Planning Commission commented that staff consider revising the proposed amendment language from “Light Industrial or Commercial or Residential” to “Light Industrial and/or Commercial and/or Residential” to emphasize the acceptability of mixed uses on the site. Staff agreed and has made the currently proposed amendment language consistent with this suggestion. In response to the applicant noting that discussions were underway with the City to acquire right-of-way directly south and directly east of the site, a Planning Commissioner asked whether these potential acquisitions should be taken into account in the plan amendment process. Staff has reviewed this question and determined that the notification area for the public hearing would not change, and that if the right-of-way were to be acquired, the land uses allowable for the amendment site would apply. The acquisition would be taken into account during the rezoning process that the applicant intends to pursue if the plan amendment is approved. The Planning Commission also asked some questions related to the applicant’s presentation about the type of non-traditional housing project the applicant is considering if the plan amendment is approved.

Existing Zoning and Land Uses: The 2.2-acre amendment site is currently zoned I-1 (light industrial) and includes an existing warehouse storage building on the three parcels that comprise the site. The property north of the amendment site across 15th Street is bordered by the Arroyo Chico Greenway shared path and Tucson Unified School District's Cherry Field ballparks. The properties to the south and east of the site are also zoned I-1. Immediately to the south is an industrial warehouse for a restaurant supply company. A City-owned right-of-way parcel abuts the amendment site to the east. The properties, across from the site on the west side of Cherry Avenue, which are zoned P-1 (park industrial), accommodate Cox Communications and the University of Arizona Motor Pool. Roma Imports, a local restaurant and caterer, is southwest of the site. The site is within the boundaries of the Barrio San Antonio Neighborhood. *[See Attachment E.]*

Land Use Policy Direction: Policy direction is provided by *Plan Tucson, City of Tucson General & Sustainability Plan / 2013* and the *Arroyo Chico Area Plan (ACAP) / 1986*. *Plan Tucson* policies are long-term, broad-based, and apply to the entire city, whereas *ACAP* policies are more narrowly focused and apply only in the area covered by the plan. Key policies are summarized below. *[See Attachment F for a more detailed policy listing.]*

Plan Tucson, City of Tucson General & Sustainability Plan / 2013. *Plan Tucson* provides general guidance for determining the general location of development opportunities. The *Plan Tucson* Future Growth Scenario Map identifies the amendment site area as a Business Center Building Block, defined as "major commercial or employment districts that act as major drivers of Tucson's economy. These centers generally contain corporate or multiple-use office, industrial, or retail uses." Associated development guidelines support a mix of commercial, residential, office, governmental, and other service activities; infill and redevelopment projects that reflect sensitivity to site and neighborhood conditions; and protection of established residential neighborhoods by supporting compatible development, which may include other residential, mixed-use infill and appropriate nonresidential uses.

Plan Tucson Policy LT3 encourages development of areas with multiple uses, including residential where there is accessibility to multiple modes of transportation, potential for moderate or higher densities of development, and existing or upgraded public facilities and infrastructure can accommodate the development.

Arroyo Chico Area Plan (ACAP) / 1986: The Arroyo Chico Area is an approximately 4.3-square-mile triangle, which is bounded on the north by Broadway Boulevard; on the south by the Southern Pacific Railroad, Fairland Stravenue, 36th Street, and Aviation Highway; and on the east by Alvernon Way. The *ACAP* was last amended on February 4, 2015 (Resolution #22348) to allow parking on a parcel at the southeast corner of Eastbourne Avenue and Manchester Street.

The stated purpose of the *ACAP* "is to guide development while protecting and enhancing existing neighborhoods." The general goals of the plan emphasize the preservation of linear

open space along Arroyo Chico; encouragement of compatible mixed use; and protection of neighborhoods from truck traffic, while allowing industrial and business access to key routes.

Supportive *ACAP* policies include encouraging a mix of residential, industrial, and business uses in the plan area; encouraging residential development and the preservation of existing housing; promoting residential infill of vacant land; and preserving and maintaining the linear open space along Arroyo Chico.

Industrial

Subarea, Industrial Area 2 – Encourage industrial infill development to provide buffers adjacent to residential uses; Protect San Antonio Neighborhood from any negative impacts of industrial development along SR 210.

Public Contact: At this time, staff has received no direct comments from the public about this plan amendment request. The applicant held the required neighborhood meeting on Thursday, March 29, 2018, at Miles Exploratory Learning Center, 1400 East Broadway Boulevard. Nine (9) people signed in. Attendees' questions focused on the proposed residential use, including density, management, rent or buy, floor plan, parking, and potential use of solar. Additional issues raised were about the potential for student housing, the company leasing the property at the time of the meeting, and what would happen if the plan amendment were denied.

The applicant has met with the president of the adjacent Restaurant Supply Company about the proposed amendment for residential use, and the president had no concerns with this proposed amendment.

Discussion: The Arroyo Chico area is located directly east of Tucson's downtown area and is within close proximity to the University of Arizona, El Con Mall, and Reid Park. The area's central location and high degree of access are key features that have attracted both residential and industrial uses. The *ACAP* was adopted to provide land use policy direction to promote the preservation of and improvements to existing neighborhoods, commercial development, and industrial areas and to ensure the compatibility of new development with existing uses. The largely built up area has been experiencing pressure for redevelopment and infill given aging industrial and warehouse structures in the area, improved access with the Kino Boulevard and Aviation Parkway improvements, and market demand for non-traditional housing stock such as high density residential units and industrial live/work lofts. The area south of 16th Street and west of Kino Boulevard is scattered with industrial and residential uses. This area is identified within the *ACAP* as Subarea, Industrial Area 2: Campbell-Plumer/Aviation. More specifically, Industrial Area 2 was amended in 1997 to establish Curtis Avenue and 16th Street as the demarcation line between residential and industrial/commercial development in response to the various pressures to develop both residential and industrial uses.

However, this area since that 1997 amendment appears to be changing and a mix of uses providing for a careful integration of residential is appropriate for this area. The City of Tucson has recently been experiencing market demand for non-traditional housing, industrial live/work lofts, in which the City has responded by creating the Infill Incentive District (IID), an optional zone that allows residential uses in some industrially zoned and corridor areas. The amendment site, which is zoned I-1, is not within the IID area and, therefore, does not allow residential uses of any type. The site is located at the perimeter of the area between Curtis Avenue and Kino Boulevard. It is adjacent to Kino Parkway, in which parkway access is limited so site access will be from Cherry Avenue. The City of Tucson Department of Transportation indicates that access onto Cherry Avenue from the amendment site appears acceptable. Any future rezoning will require TDOT review and traffic impact analysis.

The amendment site is directly across the street from Cox Communications, a Park-Industrial (P-I) zoned parcel. The P-I zone provides for corporate business centers, wholesaling and manufacturing activities designed and developed in an unobtrusive, controlled manner. The I-1 property immediately adjacent to the south is a restaurant supply warehouse. This area is already a mix of industrial, commercial, and some residential uses (and residentially-zoned parcels). The area offers residential amenities, including (a) easy multi-modal access to Downtown Tucson and the University of Arizona with the Arroyo Chico Greenway shared path, approximately 250 feet north; the Aviation Bikeway, less than a quarter of a mile south; and Kino Parkway directly adjacent, and (b) surrounding services and attractions such as Roma's restaurant; the Safeway at Broadway Boulevard and Kino Parkway, and the Lost Barrio, a historic warehouse shopping district.

The proposed amendment to allow residential use east of Curtis Avenue can be supported as it would provide more users for the Arroyo Chico Greenway and Aviation Bikeway, which could help with the preservation and maintenance of these facilities; provide an increase in the customer base for existing retail services within the immediate area; help to preserve existing neighborhoods by locating non-traditional housing on the perimeter, such as higher density live/work housing options; and provide for more commercial services to the immediate area. Also the site is large enough to allow a design that is non-intrusive for the adjacent industrial and commercial uses. The proposed amendment is a first step on a case-by-case basis to allow residential use to extend into Industrial Area 2 south of 16th Street and between Kino Boulevard and Curtis Avenue.

If the proposed amendment to the *ACAP* is successful, the applicant intends to follow up with a request for rezoning to a commercial zone, C-1, which would allow residential uses. The proposal is to redevelop the site with thirty (30) two-story industrial loft-style residential units of approximately 2,000 square feet each, with a total of approximately 60,000 square feet of floor area, and to potentially repurpose the existing single-story, 9,000 square-foot warehouse building as a possible work and play venue for residents. The site design and compatible design features can be addressed during the rezoning process.

Conclusion: It is recommended that the Planning Commission forward the requested plan amendment to the Mayor and Council with a recommendation to revise the Industrial Area 2 Map in the *Arroyo Chico Area Plan* to allow “Light Industrial and/or Commercial and/or Residential” uses on the amendment site. [*See Attachment D.*]

Findings

The plan amendment request to add residential as an allowable use on the subject site recognizes:

- Consistency with *Plan Tucson, City of Tucson General & Sustainability Plan (2013)* and *Arroyo Chico Area Plan (1986)* policies supportive of mixed use and protective of existing neighborhoods.
- A growing demand for mixed use infill, including residential, in areas with aging industrial and warehouse structures in central Tucson
- Availability of easily accessible multi-modal transportation facilities and the proximity of activity centers, including the Downtown, University of Arizona, and the Bridges, and of services supportive of mixed-use with residential.
- Amendment site is large enough to allow a design that is non-intrusive for the adjacent industrial and commercial uses.
- While the Infill Incentive District (IID) is a tool the City has been using to allow residential uses in some industrially zoned and corridor areas, the amendment site is not within the IID.
- Allowing residential in the currently industrial/commercial area on a case-by-case basis is a prudent approach. The amendment site in this case is particularly well located with a road and open space to the north, a multi-lane arterial to the east, industrial and office uses across a road to the west, and a light industrial use directly to the south separated by an easement that provides room for buffering.

Attachments:

- A: Context Map
- B: Aerial
- C. Existing Industrial Area 2 Map
- D: Modified Industrial Area 2 Map
- E: Zoning Map
- F: Land Use Plan Policies
- G: Application and Materials

